Just Because They Liked Bon Bons!

The Remarkable Result of a Wager Between Three Girls of a Box of Candy

"Story Hour" among the Western Camp Fire Girls. Right—Miss Grace Brown, one of the three young women who wagered a box of candy she could do something spectacular for the Camp Fire Girls—and did.

Miss Ruth Brown, and to the right Miss Cecile Francisco, the other two participants in the wager.

OF course it is nothing unusual for three fashionable young debutantes to sit on the front steps of the home of one of them and conspire in a wager of a box of chocolate bon-bons.

It is, however, decidedly unusual for such a frivolous incident to become the guiding impulse, molding the careers of three determined young debutantes. And further, it is extraordinary that as the result of that innocent gambling on the front steps of a young woman's home 90,000 other young women whose homes are west of the Mississippi River should be joined together in a great organization which is teaching them new ideals and giving them a new twist to their romantic outlook upon life as it unfolds before the young American girl of to-day. And yet that is just what has happened, because Ruth and Grace Brown and Cecile Francisco made a bet four years ago of a box of candy.

The wager might be regarded still as undecided, yet two of the young women made up their minds to forfeit their claims and arbitrarily awarded it to the third because—but that's a part of the story.

The organization these three girls chose was that of the Camp Fire Girls. All three were attracted to it because of its recognition of the need of beauty and worship in the life of the growing girl. All three saw in this ever spreading movement a chance to build up healthy women, home makers and not home breakers, girls who can use their heads as well as their hands. Their wager was—that one of them could bring more young women into the Camp Fire fold than the others. So each started out in her own way to win the bon-bons.

There was nothing strange in three debutantes thinking of girls as girls all over the world and not just as Mary, Ellen and Millie. Men always like to say to women that they cannot maintain a conversation which centers around an idea. Women can talk only of personalities— of this man and that girl or the widow on the next street. To refute such statement let it be known that Ruth, Grace and Cecile talked that twilight only of girls—girls as dreamers, girls as builders, girls as thinking, healthy bodied women.

"Well, I've something to propose," Ruth, the youngest and not yet out of college, said. "Let's lay a wager now that the first one of us who does the biggest thing for girls gets—gets——"

"Don't be rash," her sister Grace cautioned.

"Make it a box of fresh chocolate bon-bons," Cecile Francisco smiled. Ruth's hankering for sweets was a favorite teasing point.

"I'm thirsty now," Grace declared, and thus was the wager concluded that twilight in Detroit.

At this point you may find a parallel to this story in a fairy tale which tells of the three youths who wished to gain a kingdom and incidentally a princess. It was announced that the lady would choose that man who achieved the most for the good of the kingdom. The three youths contrived to get hold of a magic apple, a magic carpet and a magic flute. All of which they used, you may remember. The apple with which to see all things everywhere at that moment; the magic carpet to take its owner de luxe to any destination in less time than it takes to develop flat feet in the subway and the magic flute with which to heal all wounds and make well the sick.

In these days of omniscient flappers with fairy tales selling below par one would hardly believe that the magic apple, magic carpet and magic flute were still with us.

But—if you will believe—the three debutantes entered the race for that box of bon-bons as fully equipped as the three youths found themselves back in the days when princesses were. It was only after they had actively entered the ranks of Camp Fire leaders that they discovered they each had one of the three magic devices.

Ruth found that she had the magic carpet after she had left Detroit for Seattle and built up a membership of three thousand Camp Fire Girls from a meager seventy in just two years.

"Yours the bon-bons," wired her sister Grace from Detroit, even as Cecile Francisco special delivered a letter from Kansas City saying: "Will you take them in individual wrappers?"

And Ruth wired back:

"Wait."

When next heard from Ruth had left on her miracle Persian for Vashon Island—just outside of Seattle and now one of the show places of the West. On her return the world was given to understand that the Camp Fire Girls of Seattle were the owners of the largest camp for girls in the United States and had now among them the dower rights of $40,000 worth of property. (Since the improvement of the island by the Camp Fire Girls the property has gone up in value.) The camp now has twenty cottages, a mile of waterfront, rowboats, canoes, one hydroplane and three adopted children, known as Rosemary and the Twins.

Again, Grace and Cecile held up the sign of the box of bon-bons and again Ruth refused—this time from Spokane, Wash., where she was organizing the local council. Her magic carpet holds good for any State in the Union—not necessarily in God's country only.

Her reply was:

"Wait another year."

And then it was revealed that Grace had the magic apple. She could see all over Detroit (without the aid of a daily) and act accordingly. The result of her apple discoveries is the most active and beneficial form of Americanization now extant. It is that Americanization which not only gives but receives. An American born Camp Fire Girl learns how to cook five dishes the little Syrian born Camp Fire Girls teach her. In return, the American born Camp Fire Girl teaches the Syrian girl how to dance five American dances or to sing five American songs. A group of Hungarian Camp Fire Girls translated folk songs and lullabies which their mothers and grandmothers very graciously sang for them while at their household tasks.

Prating internationalism and getting blue in the face mouthing the words "melting pot" is not the way of Grace Brown. Hers the way a nation might adopt to its best advantage. Who knows but this form of Americanization may be just an indication of the abilities of this girl as a lawyer, for she expects to be admitted to the bar within the year.

Grace Brown has organized the little negro girls of Detroit until to-day they form the largest group of negro Camp Fire Girls in any part of the country.

The big single achievement came with the Fords giving the Camp Fire Girls a community house in Highland Park, just beyond Detroit, known now as the Wigwam. Here the girls learn to keep the seven points of the Camp Fire law of: Seek beauty, give service, pursue knowledge, be trustworthy, hold on to health, glorify work and be happy.

As soon as the success of Grace came to the ears of her younger sister in Seattle and Cecile Francisco in Kansas City, the telegraph wires trembled with:

"Yours the laurels and the bon-bons—"

Grace, blushing profusely, wired back:

"Wait till we hear from Cecile. Decide at National Conference in New York."

From Cecile Francisco came no communique whatever. She was busy, she admitted in grudgingly small letters. Camp Shawnee at Grandview, a distance from Kansas City, took a bit of her time and energy. Beyond that, neither Grace nor Ruth could get anything more. But then, that was the way of Cecile. No fanfare, no trumpets to herald her accomplishments. Whatever was on her mind she went and did. And no one knew, until after the deed was done.

Came the joyous day when the East, West, North and South mothers and the others gathered together at the opening of the National Conference of Camp Fire Girls at the Russell Sage Foundation. The roll was called—a very pleasant method, as I recall, where each member as her name was mentioned, rose and said: "How do you do?" to everybody else in the room. And Ruth Brown, not looking a night older than the twilight when she offered up the box of sweets, rose and smiled at every one out of her blue eyes and said:

"How do you do?"

And Grace Brown, built more sturdily than her sister with a definite dimple in her chin, also rose and said:

"How do you do?"

But when the name of Cecile Francisco was called, a square built blondish young woman appeared from a far corner of the room and shyly said:

"I'm not Miss Francisco, but how do you do? Miss Francisco was unable to come at the last moment and sent me instead. She—she—I don't know whether I'm supposed to tell, but I know you'll want to know after you know—just why Miss Francisco couldn't come on to the conference."

And then in that graphic way which only sincerity and simplicity of expression can give, the substitute from Kansas City told of the sacrifice of Cecile Francisco. A year ago she volunteered to give her blood to any patient in need of it at the Christian Church Hospital in Kansas City. But the call for her did not come until a week before the conference opening, when she was told that she could now make good her offer. She gave two pints of her blood to a man who was a total stranger to her. And then when they pressed upon her the money in return for her heroism she took the sum and gave it to the Near East Relief.

The brown eyes of Grace sought the blue ones of her sister as their hands met in a grip of understanding.

"Isn't that just like Cecile Francisco?" they demanded in one breath.

Thus it happened that the same mail that carried the national honor for life saving from the headquarters of the Camp Fire Girls to Cecile Francisco brought with it a box of fresh chocolate bon-bons.

And thus it happened that Cecile Francisco wired to the Brown sisters:

"Thanks for the bon-bons. Don't deserve them, really. Can't have them until health chart finished."

Which translated from the Camp Fire vernacular means that Cecile Francisco was keeping the health chart of the Camp Fire Girls and could not eat any candy for the next three months.

But never mind, there'll be plenty of sweets for Cecile Francisco when the wedding bells ring out as they will soon—very soon.

Searching for Kentucky's Long Lost Silver Mines

THE arrival of a party of Indians in the mountains of Kentucky from Oklahoma has revived a hundred and forty year search for the silver mines discovered by John Swift in 1761. From that time to 1769 Swift made a number of trips into that section of the country, returning after each trip to his home in North Carolina with a large quantity of silver.

Swift, finally driven out of Kentucky and killed by hostile Indians, left very meager information regarding his journeys and the places where he had hidden sums of money. The most minute description is that contained in a memorandum which states that "on the First of September, 1769, we left between 22,000 and 30,000 dollars and crowns on a large creek running near a south course. Close to the spot we marked our names (Swift, Jefferson, Munday and others) on a beech tree—with compass, square and trowel. No great distance from this place we left $15,000 of the same kind, marking three or four trees with markers. Not far from these we left the prize near a forked white oak, and about three feet underground and laid two long stones across it, marking several stones close about it. At the forks of Sandy, close by the fork, is a small rock; it has a spring in one end of it. Between it and a small branch we hid a prize under the ground; it was valued at $6,000. We likewise left $3,000 buried in the rocks of the rock house."

A few years ago a bar of pure silver was found near a mill in Carter county. Several years ago a party of Indians visited Wolfe county and made its way into the hills. The Indian tracks were followed to a small creek by the side of which was a deep excavation in which a heavy body had rested. The Indians later were seen carrying away heavy bags, and from their talk it is believed they found part of the Swift silver.

There are more than a hundred caves in Carter county. In one of these a quantity of tools and instruments was discovered, which led to the belief that the mine was near one of these caves. One band of Indians was reported to be in possession of a map, but whether this was the Swift map or not never was known.

As a legend or fable is told to children, so the mothers of Kentucky tell their children the story of Swift's mine.

No word has been received from the last party to go in quest of the treasure, and its return is anxiously awaited

"Military practice" like their brothers learn.